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CHINA RENAMES 11 PLACES IN ARUNACHAL

1. China has released a third set of names in Chinese, Tibetan and Pinyin characters for Arunachal Pradesh
2. It also released a map showing the Indian state as part of the southern Tibetan region, which China refers to as Zangnan
3. This is the third batch of 'standardised geographical names' for Arunachal Pradesh issued by China's civil affairs ministry. The 1st batch renaming six places was released in 2017 and the 2nd batch of 15 places in 2021
4. The move is part of Beijing's efforts to reemphasise its claim over the Indian state
5. India has dismissed such claims, asserting the state has always been and will always be its integral part and that assigning 'invented' names doesn't alter it | P7

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UP man behind Kerala train fire, say police

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Kozhikode

A day after a man set passengers on fire on the Alappuzha-Kannur Executive Express at Elathur, near Kozhikode, evidence gathered by the police so far indicates the assailant is a native of Noida (Uttar Pradesh), goes by the name Sharukh Saifi and reached Kerala recently.

Three persons — a man, a woman and a 2-year-old girl — died when they jumped off the train to escape the fire on Sunday night. According to police, the assailant entered D1 coach with two bottles of petrol, splashed it on passengers, and set them on fire. Soon after the attack, he fled the scene.

Eight persons who sustained burns have been admitted in various hospitals, one of them in serious condition.

The police found the name 'Sharukh Saifi' written in a notebook found in a bag recovered from the rail tracks. The bag — suspected to belong to the attacker — contained a mobile phone without a SIM card, clothes and food items. Officials said the phone was switched off a few days ago in Delhi.

Meanwhile, the Kerala government has constituted a special investigating team with P Vikraman, SP, crime branch, Malappuram, as its head. The 18-member team includes Anti-Terror Squad DySP Byju Poulose, Kozhikode Assistant Commissioner P Bijuraj and Tanur DySP V V Benny besides inspectors and sub-inspectors from various stations.

Rahul gets bail, hearing against verdict on Apr 13

Court admits his appeal in defamation case

DILIP SINGH KSHATRIYA @ Ahmedabad

A sessions court in Surat on Monday admitted Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's appeal against his conviction in a 2019 criminal defamation case over his controversial remarks on the Modi surname, for which he was sentenced to two years in jail by the trial court.

The court also granted him bail till the disposal of his appeal and posted the matter for hearing on April 13.

In his appeal, Rahul argued he was treated harshly by the trial court and was sentenced in a manner so as to attract disqualification as a Member of Parliament.

Along with his main plea, Rahul filed two additional applications — the first for the suspension of sentence or for regular bail, and the second for the suspension of conviction.

If the second application is allowed, his Lok Sabha membership could be restored, subject to the issuance of a notification by the LS Secretariat.

The sessions court did not stay his conviction but issued a notice to complainant Purnesh Modi, a BJP MLA and former Gujarat cabinet minister, over the matter.

Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi leave the Surat court on Monday | PTI

After getting bail from the sessions court, Rahul tweeted: "Truth is my weapon... This is a fight to save democracy, against 'Mitrakal'. In this struggle, truth is my weapon, and truth is my refuge."

Gehlot said that the senior Congress leaders came to Surat to show their solidarity with the Gandhi scion. "We have faith in the judiciary... We are engaging in satyagraha in order to save the country. The country is watching how Rahul Gandhi, Indira Gandhi's grandson, and Rajiv Gandhi's son, is being treated today," he said.

According to sources, Rahul will not be present during the next hearing. His counsel requested the court that the accused be excused from appearing in court again, to which Additional Sessions Judge R P Mogera agreed.

Ex-bureaucrat first head of Road Safety Board: Gadkari

PARVEZ SULTAN @ New Delhi

THE ministry of road transport and highways on Monday constituted the much-awaited National Road Safety Board with retired bureaucrat U P Singh as its chairman. "Today, I approved the constitution of the Board. Retired IAS officer U P Singh has been appointed Board's chairman," said Nitin Gadkari, minister of road transport and highways at this newspaper's *Delhi Dialogues*, which is a monthly interaction with power players in Delhi.

An IITian and a 1985-batch IAS officer, Singh last served as secretary in the Union ministry of textiles.

In September 2021, the ministry had notified the constitution of the Board to formulate specific standards for road safety, traffic management, road construction and enhancing skill sets of the traffic police, hospitals and highway officials.

Speaking on road safety and accidents, Gadkari said it was the only area his ministry couldn't get success in despite its best efforts.

"In India, five lakh accidents are reported in a year in which 1.5 lakh lives are lost and three lakh people injured every year. And 60% of road accident deaths belong to the age group of 18-24 years. This we have not been able to control but are making efforts," he said.

Hall of shame

25 OF 28 GANGSTERS LIVING ABROAD FROM PUNJAB: MHA

MHA's list of 28 gangsters of Indian origin based in foreign countries shows 25 of them belong to Punjab while rest hail from Rajasthan & Maharashtra | P8

Lynching: 4 teams to nab Kerehalli

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bengaluru

THE Ramanagara district police have formed four teams to arrest right-wing activist Punith Kerehalli, who is accused of lynching Idrees Pasha (39) – an assistant driver of a cattle transport vehicle, in Sathanur police station limits on early on Saturday morning.

"The accused are yet to be arrested. A team of doctors from the Department of Forensic Medicine has conducted the postmortem and we are waiting for the report to ascertain the exact cause of (Pasha's) death. Only the postmortem report will shed light on the exact cause of the death," BR Ravikanthe Gowda, Inspector General of Police (IGP), Central Range, told The New Indian Express.

One team is headed by the inspector of Sathanur police station, while the other by the DySP of the sub-division, and two others by the sub-division police.

Kerehalli along with four others have been booked for murder after the body of Pasha was found a stone's throw away from the Sathanur police station.

CONTINUED ON: P5

Idrees Pasha and Punith Kerehalli

EXPRESS READ

Modi to hold 20 mega rallies in Karnataka

Bengaluru: Prime Minister Narendra Modi is likely to hold a series of rallies in Karnataka once the BJP announces its candidates' list for the Assembly elections. He is expected to hold around 20 rallies, at least four a day. With many surveys indicating that the ruling BJP may not get a clear majority, the party's state and central leaders are leaving no stone unturned to win 140 seats | P4

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